The management of the electoral results in Venezuela did not meet the transparency standards necessary to be credible

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The pre-election period was marked by restrictions on civic and political space and the government's campaign dominated state media, according to the preliminary report of the UN panel of experts deployed in Venezuela to observe the presidential elections in which the current president, Nicolás Maduro, was proclaimed the winner. Venezuelan authorities cooperated and supported the deployment of the panel.

The process of management of results by the National Electoral Council (CNE) of Venezuela **did not comply with the basic measures of transparency and integrity** that are essential for the holding of credible elections, says the preliminary report of the UN Panel of Experts deployed in that country during the elections.

In the document released Wednesday, the four electoral experts who make up the Panel present their first observations of the process during their stay in Venezuela, from the end of June to August 2, 2024.

According to that team, the election – dominated by the campaigns of President Nicolás Maduro, and the main opposition candidate Edmundo González Urrutia, of the Democratic Unitary Platform – was characterized by **restrictions on civic and political space**, with the government's campaign dominating state media, to which the opposition had very limited access.

Despite this inequality, observers reported a **peaceful and enthusiastic pre-election period** on the part of the electorate.

The voting day

Equally peaceful was the day of the elections, whose **logistics** organization **and electronic voting system were well designed and reliable**, registering a participation of 59.97%.

The report notes that while the transmission of electronic results worked well at the beginning, it was abruptly halted in the hours following the closure of the tables **without any explanation being given** to the candidates.

Later, the president of the National Electoral Council indicated that **the transmission had been affected by a cyberattack** that delayed the counting process, but then postponed and canceled three key audits that could have revealed the details of the external attack.

Announcement of the winner

A day after **the** votes**, with 80% of the polling stations**, the CNE announced the triumph of President Nicolás Maduro with 51.2% of the vote. Edmundo González got 44.2%. On August 2, the CNE confirmed that victory, with 51.95%.

The Panel stresses, however, that the Council **has not published and has not yet published any results to support these** orally made **announcements**, thus contravening the electoral legal framework.

In addition to failing to meet the standards of transparency and integrity, the CNE did **not** follow national legal and regulatory provisions, and **did not meet the deadlines.**

Results without details

“The announcement of the outcome of an election without the publication of its details or the dissemination of tabulated results to candidates is unprecedented in contemporary democratic elections. This had a **negative impact on the confidence of the result** announced by the CNE among a large part of the Venezuelan electorate,” the panel said.

The Panel reports the **contentious electoral appeal presented by President Nicolás Maduro**, who seeks to review the process and verify the results. For now, there is no detailed information on how the evaluation will be carried out.

With regard to reports of victims of post-election protests, experts take note and clarify that they have not attempted to corroborate them.

The Panel, which was cooperated by the Venezuelan authorities, will later present to the UN Secretary-General a comprehensive report in which it will abound on the legal framework of the elections, the electoral roll, the registration of candidates, the context of the campaign, the electoral administration and the political participation of women.